

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-28. (canceled)

29. (previously presented) An article of manufacture having a vacuum deposited fractal surficial structure, which fractal surficial structure includes both valve metal and an oxide thereof, the valve metal being selected from the group consisting of aluminum, titanium, tantalum, niobium, zirconium, silicon, thorium, cadmium and tungsten.

30. (previously presented) The article of manufacture of claim 29, wherein said surficial structure is self-similar between a length scale of between about 2 microns and 0.2 microns.

31. (previously presented) The article of manufacture of claim 29, wherein said valve metal is aluminum.

32. (previously presented) A capacitor comprising the article of manufacture of claim 29.

33. (previously presented) An anodized electrode comprising the article of manufacture of claim 29.

34. (currently amended) An electrode comprising:

- (a) an electrically conductive substrate; and
- (b) a discontinuous vacuum deposited layer of an oxide of a first valve metal, on a surface of said substrate

wherein said first valve metal is selected from the group consisting of magnesium, thorium, cadmium, tungsten, tin, iron, silver, tantalum, titanium, aluminum, zirconium and niobium.

35. (previously presented)      The electrode of claim 34, wherein said electrically conductive substrate includes a second valve metal.

36. (previously presented)      The electrode of claim 35, wherein said first and second valve metals are identical.

37-44. (canceled)

45. (new) An electrode comprising:

- (a) an electrically conductive substrate; and
- (b) a discontinuous vacuum deposited layer of aluminum oxide, on a surface of said substrate.

46. (new) The electrode of claim 45 wherein said electrically conductive substrate includes aluminum.

47. (new) The electrode of claim 34 wherein said electrically conductive substrate includes aluminum.